**Purdue Habitat for Humanity
International Trip 2013**

**What is the international trip?**

This year we are excited to present an opportunity for you to use your Spring Break to travel and volunteer internationally. Participation in the international trip enables students to put their faith in action, to build partnerships with people sharing a common goal, to gain greater awareness of the need for decent and affordable housing worldwide, and to deepen their commitment to social action. Through hands on construction, students work toward eliminating poverty housing from the world.

“It’s a pretty big difference spending a week laboring beside the family whose house you are building, [rather] than sending a check to some random location 5,000 miles away.”

– Max Schneider,

Student volunteer (University of Cincinnati)

The international trip will be facilitated through the Global Builders program of the Fuller Center for Housing. The Fuller Center for Housing was founded in 2005 by Millard Fuller, the same man who founded Habitat for Humanity in 1976. Both Habitat for Humanity and the Fuller Center for Housing are nonprofit organizations that work to construct or renovate homes in order to provide adequate shelter for those in need. The main difference between the two organizations is operating philosophy. The Fuller Center’s Global Builders program was chosen because it will provide the same experience as a Habitat-facilitated trip at a more affordable price.

**Where, What, and Why?**

*“There is no way I could have ever bought with money any of the things that I have learned or felt by working on this house.”*

 *-Nancy Boyd, Volunteer*

This year we will be sending a team of Purdue students to San Luis Talpa, El Salvador. The trip will take place from Mar. 9-16, 2013.

In general you will help with the construction of new homes, although sometimes there will be opportunities for Greater Blessings projects where you will perform small repairs or improvements on existing homes. You may also respond to emergency and disaster needs if necessary, so please remain open to a variety of possibilities. On-site construction supervision is provided, and building experience is **NOT** necessary.

The international trip will provide the opportunity to do hands-on construction, experience a new culture, and most importantly, make a difference in the lives of the local people. The construction experience from the international trip will be different from the work that we do locally through Saturday Habitat builds, as Habitat for Humanity and Fuller Center build homes that are location- and country-specific in terms of design and building materials in order to fit the culture and needs of the community. Also, you will get a chance to form new friendships and work toward a common goal alongside fellow Purdue students. Students are often amazed by the closeness of a group at the end of the trip. After a week of learning new skills and working hard alongside other students, you’ll find closeness between yourself and the other participants that can only be forged in the process of working together to help others.

**Country Background**

El Salvador, known as the "Tom Thumb" of the Americas, is the smallest Central American country. With a population of 7,066,403 (July 2008 est.), it is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with some 700,000 Salvadorans in need of decent, adequate housing. An estimated 30.7 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, while over 40 percent of the rural population lives in homes with dirt floors and impermanent wall material.

In late 2006, the government and the Millennium Challenge Corporation signed a five-year, $461 million compact to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty in the country’s northern region through investments in education, public services, enterprise development, and transportation infrastructure. However, many Salvadoran families continue to struggle to survive while living in dilapidated housing.
[Source: Fuller Center for Housing]

The official language of El Salvador is Spanish. While it is always helpful to have Spanish speakers on your team, it is not a necessity. Spanish skills on the worksite will always be beneficial but are never required because most of your instructions will come from English speaking staff. In other cases where Spanish speaking skills are necessary, translation services will almost always be available.

**Transportation**

You will be flying with your team members into El Salvador International Airport (SAL) in San Salvador. Upon arrival, a van and driver will be provided for the week. This will include travel between the airport, your housing, the work site, and any tourism activities.

**Lodging**

Most teams will stay in a house either on or near the beach. Exactly which house depends on the number of people on the team and if other groups will be there at the same time. Don’t worry, you’ll like it. The homes have electricity, running water, showers, and internet access (Some services can be less reliable than in the United States so try to be understanding).

**Rest and Relaxation**

El Salvador has many fun tourism opportunities and/or relaxing activities in which your group can participate. Try to have some ideas of what your team may enjoy as some things (like surfing lessons or zip lining) require some advance time to setup. Other things like volcanoes and parks can be more spontaneous and decided upon when your team arrives. You might also want to participate in cultural activities or visit the local market. Since you will be staying on the beach, most teams find it best to simply relax at home in the evenings after work days.

**Community Outreach**

While the work site will be an active construction zone, it is also an active neighborhood with many families and kids. Most of the time there will be a future home owner working on sweat equity hours working alongside your team. While some opportunities for interaction are provided (and kids are sure to follow you around), most interaction will require your initiative. Your group can plan activities with the community members or the kids or simply initiate casual conversations around the area. Even if you can’t speak the language, acknowledging community members with a smile or “Hola!” can go a long way in developing a relationship or making people feel special.

**Sample Trip Schedule**

Actual trip schedule may vary.

Saturday – Depart from the U.S. in the early morning. Arrive in El Salvador in the afternoon.
Sunday – Free day
Monday and Tuesday – Work from 9am-4pm on construction
Wednesday – Half day (work from 9am-12pm) or free day, as desired
Thursday and Friday – Work from 9am-4pm on construction
Saturday – Depart from El Salvador in the morning. Arrive back in the U.S. in the evening.

**Immunizations (Vaccinations)**

The Fuller Center does not require any immunizations for the trip. (If interested, you can take a look online at immunization recommendations from experts through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.) However, we do suggest that you have an updated tetanus shot.

**Expenses**

The only fixed cost is the Fuller Center in-country fee, which includes food, lodging, ground transportation, security, travel health insurance, and donation to the local project. All other expenses are variable and sometimes dependent on the individual. Below is a general estimate of the trip costs that we believe is a good representation of the trip costs, but please be aware that it might not be an accurate figure.

Note: El Salvador uses the U.S. dollar as currency, so no currency exchange is necessary for any spending within the country.

Fuller Center in-country expenses (includes

food, lodging, ground transportation, security, $700

travel health insurance, and donation to the local

project)

Airfare (variable) ~$600-$1000

Miscellaneous (round trip travel to/from ~$50

IND aiport, El Salvador tourist visa)

Passport (if you don’t already have one) ~$110-135

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Total ~$1460-1885

\*Any additional expenses will be optional (dining out at local restaurants, purchase of souvenirs, tourism activities, etc.).

**Fundraising**

If you are concerned about the expenses of an international trip, there are easy ways to fundraise. Success in fundraising is dependent on personal motivation and initiative. We do not fundraise collectively as a group for the trip, as all funds raised during the school year through our fundraising events go toward our local, student-funded Habitat house. However, two resources that we can provide to you are:

* Personal fundraising page: An online page that lets people know that you’re raising funds for a trip and helps you to keep track of donations as they come in.
* Cover letters: A pre-written template, which can be modified by you if desired, that explains the trip and the cause to whomever you choose to send it.

**Payment Schedule and Refund Policy**

The trip will be paid by each participant in 3 installments. The first deposit of $150, along with the trip application, must be received by Purdue Habitat by Oct. 26, 2012.

1st payment ($150) – Oct. 26, 2012

2nd payment ($225) – late November or early December, 2012

3rd payment ($225) – late January, 2013

The 3 trip payments are all **non-refundable**. However, they are *transferrable* up until Jan. 28, 2013, which means that you may request back any of the 3 trip payments made to Purdue Habitat up until that point in time only under the condition that a new participant (whose application must first be approved by Purdue Habitat) agrees to take your spot on the trip and submits all necessary payments by that date. We welcome any initiative on your part to find a suitable replacement if you are hoping for a refund, as it is not our responsibility to actively search for a new candidate. Airfare refunds are **not** provided by, nor guaranteed, by Purdue Habitat. Any refund on committed airfare is solely granted by and at the discretion of the airlines.

Please note that submission of the 1st payment is a commitment on your part to participate in the trip, which we use to finalize reservations for the trip. However, we understand that in rare situations, circumstances arise that prevent a volunteer from honoring this commitment and participating in the trip as planned. As a courtesy, please make cancellation requests to Purdue Habitat ***as soon as possible*** so that we can contact the Fuller Center and still ensure a successful trip for other participants. This will also increase the likelihood that we are able to find someone to take your place on the trip.

If the trip is cancelled by Purdue Habitat due to lack of participants, then you will receive a full refund.

**Rules and Requirements**

1. The most important requirement to participate in the trip is the desire to use your Spring Break to help those in need of decent housing.
2. We also require that you are an active member of the Purdue chapter of Habitat for Humanity, which means two things. It means you must have turned in a membership form and paid the $20/year dues, and it means that you have participated with our chapter’s activities in some way other than general meetings (any of the following: Saturday build, Friday ReStore, fundraising or publicity committee, any fundraising or advocacy event). If you have not done this, the easiest thing to do is to sign up for a construction build for any Saturday before Spring Break. If you have not volunteered with us on a Saturday build before, we highly recommend it prior to your trip.
3. You will be required to attend at least 2 pre-departure group meetings. This time will be used to get to know fellow trip participants, complete important paperwork and other preparative tasks, and make plans for the trip. Dates and times will be determined later.
4. While you’ll have more fun on these trips than any other type, drinking alcohol is **NOT** a part of these trips in any way.

**To-Do List Prior to the Trip**

*To be completed… now!:*

* Read and understand trip details and policies presented in this information packet
* Turn in application with non-refundable deposit of $150 – by Oct. 26, 2012

Checks are preferred (made out to Purdue Habitat for Humanity), though cash is also acceptable. Please submit the application with your $150 deposit by campus or US mail, submit it to an officer at a Purdue Habitat meeting, or drop it off at our Habitat office during office hours. If you choose to mail it, we must **receive** it by the deadline.

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| --- | --- |
| Mailing address: Purdue Habitat for Humanity Stewart center, Box #706128 Memorial MallWest Lafayette, IN 47906 | Office:Stewart Center, Rm. G22BOffice hours and meeting dates can be found at: www.purdue.edu/habitat |

*To be completed later.* *You may start thinking about the following tasks,* *but please do not complete them until the trip has been confirmed and we give you the “green light.” Purdue Habitat is not responsible for any premature actions taken in the event of a trip cancellation:*

* Apply for or renew passport (if needed) – allow plenty of time for this. We recommend doing this at least 6 weeks before the trip, but earlier is better.
* Purchase airline tickets – Ideally the group should travel on the same flight, but it is up to the individual if he or she chooses to travel on a different flight

*Additional tasks:*

* Turn in Purdue Habitat membership form with $20 dues (if you’re not already a member)
* Participate in at least one Purdue Habitat event, such as a Saturday build (if you have not already)
* Attend 2 pre-departure trip meetings (TBD)

\*\*If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact Evelyn Chang at chang41@purdue.edu or Purdue Habitat at purduehabitat@gmail.com.

*“I’ve had a lot of experiences in my life, including being a lawyer…running for president, being a U.S. Senator, meeting famous people all over the world. I have never done anything in my life that is worth more to me than what you are doing now. This is what you will remember, I promise you.”*

*– Former U.S. Senator John Edwards, speaking to student volunteers from UCLA and University of Cincinnati during a Fuller Center trip in El Salvador, Dec. 2009*

 **Purdue Habitat for Humanity
El Salvador International Trip 2013 Application**

**\*\*Application and $150 deposit due by Oct. 26, 2012\*\***

Detach, fill out, and submit this page as your trip application. Keep the informational pages of the packet for your reference. Please write legibly.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | Date of birth: |
| Email address: | Phone number: |
| Local address: | Permanent address: |
| Year at Purdue (circle):FR SO JR SR Grad | Major: |

1. Please briefly describe your experience with Habitat for Humanity at Purdue or elsewhere.
2. Have you participated in a Habitat/Fuller Center trip or a similar trip before? If so, please briefly describe the experience.
3. What do you hope to gain from this trip experience?

**By signing below, I hereby state that I have read and understand the information and policies presented in the information packet regarding the El Salvador international trip and agree to comply with all rules set forth.**

Signature Date